Making the Most of Philosophy Grad School with an Eye to the Job Market

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This document is meant to serve as a starting point for thinking about various aspects of grad school and the profession of philosophy. Plenty of what I say here is controversial, so take what seems useful, ignore what doesn't, and when in doubt collect more advice from more people.

Contents

1. Objectives

Learn How to Publish

I would say that your primary objective in grad school should be to learn how to write a publishable paper. If you focus on this, you'll likely find that other important things just fall into place: writing good term papers, getting good grades, impressing your professors, getting into conferences, selecting a dissertation topic, building your CV, getting publications, getting external committee members, getting strong letters of recommendation, completing your dissertation.

Get One Publication

You should aim to have *one* good publication by the time you go on the market. More than one is even better, but the difference between zero and one is much greater than the difference between one and two. Having a publication is one of the few ways for you to stand out in the stack of applicants—all with complimentary letters from their professors, all with a polished writing sample, and most coming out of better-ranked programs. This is true for most schools, not just R1 (i.e., top research) institutions. More here:

> http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2012/05/grad-students-questions-about-publishing/comments/page/1/

If you only start thinking about publications the year you go on the market, it'll almost certainly be too late. It's unlikely that the first journal you send the paper to will accept it, and even if they ultimately do it's unlikely that they'll get back to you with a decision in a timely manner. Aim to have something under review by the end of your third year.

Teaching

Become an excellent teacher. Most of the jobs you'll be applying to will care a great deal about your commitment to undergraduate education. So make the most of your teaching opportunities, and take time to reflect on what does and doesn't work for you in the classroom (and why) and what sorts of values guide your decisions about how you run your courses.

Learn the Profession

Get comfortable being in conference settings and interacting with philosophers you don't know. When you're on the market, let it be the hundredth time that you've answered the question "so, what do you work on?" and the hundredth time you've talked shop with a philosopher who works outside of your area (about their work or about yours). And let your job talk be the tenth (or twentieth) time you've presented a paper to a roomful of strangers.

Help Us Help You

When you go on the market, you will be asked for at least three letters of recommendation (though most people submit five or six). You have to enable us to write you strong letters and to go to bat for you on the market. So get to know as many faculty members as you can, engage us in philosophical conversation (inside and outside of class), and show us that you're a great interlocutor and have lots of interesting things to say. And invite likely letter writers to visit your classes, so we can talk about your teaching in our recommendation letters.

2. Submitting to Journals

When to Submit

How do you know when your paper's ready to submit to a journal? When you have poured hours and hours and hours of work into it, fine-tuning not just the arguments, but also the individual sentences. If you haven't spent at least five times as long revising it as you spent writing the first draft, it almost certainly is not ready. (More below on editing and revising.) That said, the paper doesn't have to be absolutely perfect before you submit it. If you're not sure whether it's ready, ask one of your professors.

Length

The appropriate length for a paper is largely a function of the significance of the point you're making. You should generally aim for something between 4000 and 8000 words. Here is an illuminating excerpt from one journal's instructions for referees, which I suspect is at least an implicit policy for most journals and referees: "In the case of a paper longer than 8000 words, referees should note the editorial policy that, after that point, the acceptance bar rises with increasing length (roughly speaking, a 16000-word paper would have to be sufficiently good to out-compete not just one but two good papers of 8000 words each)." If you've got a paper that's longer than 8000 words, it's unlikely that it really needs to be that long; you just need to try harder to be concise and cut out extraneous information. Nearly every paper I referee would have been significantly stronger if the author had made an effort to make it at least 20% shorter.

The Process

You submit your paper to one journal at a time. The editor receives your paper and will probably send it along to one or two referees. The referees send referee reports to the editor, which may or may not be passed along to you. The editor then makes a decision and lets you know. This can sometimes take a long time. At least four months is normal, and up to a year is not all that uncommon for certain journals. It's a good idea to have a document in which you keep track of where and when you've submitted which papers to which journals, and any contact you've had with the editors.

Choosing a Journal

You may want to avoid the very top journals, since they tend to have extraordinarily high rejection rates, and some take absurdly long to render a verdict. A good place to start is the next tier down (e.g., the journals ranked 9-17 in Appendix II). See here for some information about typical wait times:

https://airtable.com/shrWKotYTw0ezNN4N/tbl9E479DxjlJf2zJ

Good Publications

Not every publication is a good publication: some won't help you, and some may even hurt you. Any peer-reviewed journal with at least *some* name recognition will probably help you at teaching-focused schools, though publications in random venues that no one has heard of may hurt you even at these schools (and almost certainly won't help you). Among the general interest journals ranked in Appendix II, I suspect that anything above 23 is fine for most research-focused schools, and anything above 17 is fine at the very top schools. Resist the temptation to submit your paper to a random journal, just because the

name of the journal, or some special issue of the journal, sounds like an exact match for your paper (e.g., *Studies in the Philosophy of Ecology*). The reason that random publications can hurt you is that they invite questions of whether the quality of the work is so low that this is the only place you can manage to publish it. They also tend to dilute the effect of strong publications, and search committees may fail to notice your *Philosophical Quarterly* publication if it's buried in a list of random publications. See here for further discussion:

> http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2012/05/grad-students-questions-about-publishing.html

Inquiring about Submissions

After about four months have passed, it's fine to send a polite email to the editor, asking about the status of your paper. This often spurs the editor to nudge the referees to get going on the refereeing. Don't send an indignant email. It often isn't the editor's fault; it's an irresponsible referee. Something like this: "I'm writing to inquire about the status of my submission to [[journal name]], '[[paper title]]'. The paper was submitted over [[number]] months ago, and I just wanted to make sure it hasn't somehow slipped through the cracks." See here for a discussion of the editorial process from an editor's perspective:

> http://www.newappsblog.com/2012/05/a-plead-from-the-editor.html

Addressing Referee Reports

If your paper is rejected, don't feel obligated to address every objection in the referee report before you send it to the next journal. You insert a new section responding to one referee's misguided objection, and then the referee for the next journal complains that the section is pointless because no one would raise such a stupid objection. So use your judgment. If, after reading the referee reports, you feel that your paper was rejected for ludicrous reasons, it's not out of the question to send a polite email to the editor, concisely explaining your reservations about the referee report, and asking them to reconsider. But it's worth bearing a couple things in mind before you send such an email. First, since the editor chose this referee, there's a decent chance that the editor thinks highly of the referee's abilities. So bear that in mind before you complain about the referee's incompetence in your objection to their report. Second, referees are also given the opportunity to send confidential remarks to the editor that won't be passed along to you, and for all you know they said something like "the writing's so bad I can't even tell what the argument is!"—in which case you look like a damn fool if you write an indignant email about how the referee completely misunderstood your argument.

Revise and Resubmit

You may receive a "revise and resubmit" (R&R) from the journal, which means that they're willing to reconsider your paper after you revise in light of the referees' comments. When you resubmit your paper, you should also send a note explaining the changes you made. Address the note to the editor, express your gratitude for the opportunity to resubmit the paper, and explain in detail how you responded to each of the referee's points (directing them to the relevant parts of your revised paper). The main aim here is to convey to the referees and editor that you've given a lot of thought to the

comments and made extensive revisions in light of them. (If only minimal revisions were needed, you would've gotten a "conditional acceptance", not an R&R.) If there are objections the referee raised that you choose not to address in the paper, explain why in the letter. Just make sure not to come off as combative: even if you think the referee comments were stupid, try to spin them in the best light and give thoughtful responses. Put a lot of time and thought into this note; it's important.

Writing Referee Reports
You may at some point be asked to serve as a referee. Make sure to complete the report within a month of agreeing to do it; even better if you can get it done within a week. You should begin the report by summarizing the central thesis and argumentative structure of the paper. This enables the editor to evaluate the criticisms you raise in your report. If you recommend rejection, you should highlight your main reservations about the paper. Sometimes the primary reason for rejection is some crucial misunderstanding or a failure to adequately respond to certain objections, but other times it's that the quality of the writing is not up to professional standards, or it's the sheer quantity of small errors and unclarities. (Don't reject it just because you thought up an objection that they neglected to address, unless it's a glaring omission.) Then, having identified what you take to be the main problems, you can go on to raise further (perhaps more minor) objections and make other suggestions for improvement. Try to be helpful, and don't be malicious or snarky. See these documents for more information:

> http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1719043
> lewispowell.com/service/Referee Report Handout.pdf

3. Writing

Publishable Prose
Coming up with publishable ideas is only half the battle. If the quality of your writing is not up to professional standards, that by itself is often treated as sufficient reason for rejection. Good, publishable writing has a "tightness" about it: no unnecessary repetition, no unnecessarily wordy sentences, no extraneous set-up, and (most importantly) a perspicuous structure to the paragraphs, the sections, and the paper as a whole. Also, make sure that individual sentences say *precisely* what you mean for them to say—it's not enough for the sentence to convey roughly what you have in mind—and there should be no inaccuracies, however minimal, in your attributions of views to other philosophers. I identify some common mistakes in grad student writing here: http://korman.faculty.philosophy.ucsb.edu/GradComments.pdf

Stay Current
You need to engage with recent papers. It's hopeless trying to publish a paper raising some objection to Smith's 1974 article—unless, that is, you can show that Jones and Brown and Anderson are still taking Smith's view for granted in their recent work. Even if you're writing on historical figures, you should be engaging with recent scholarly literature. Your journal referee will likely be someone who's deep in the discussion you're weighing in on, and she will almost certainly reject your paper if you seem out of touch with the recent literature. Weighing in on a debate is a bit like barging into

someone else's conversation. You don't want to unwittingly repeat some point that's already been made (at least, not without crediting the person who made it), or carelessly trample over key distinctions or background assumptions that all the parties to the debate have been taking for granted (at least, not without acknowledging the controversy).

Conferences
Go to lots of conferences. By attending lots of conference sessions, you'll begin to develop an intuitive sense of how to "package" your ideas in a paper.

Stop Reading
There are so many pertinent books and articles you'll need to read (and re-read) before you're done with the paper. But that doesn't mean you need to read them all before you *start* the paper. Reading other people's work shouldn't get in the way of your own writing (I've heard this called "The Great Grad Student Black Hole"). In fact, reading is usually far more valuable after you've taken a stab at writing up your ideas, because then you'll have a better sense of what you're reading *for*—for instance, arguments or passing remarks that bear directly on your thesis, or how others are articulating some argument or observation that you've struggled to put into words.

Workshopping
Form writing groups, exchange papers, supply comments. Looking for unclarities in your classmates' writing will help you to cultivate a critical eye toward your own writing.

First Draft
Here is what you did when you wrote term papers as an undergrad (don't deny it): you wrote the first draft two days before the due date, read it over a second time for typos, made a few stylistic tweaks, and then turned it in (and probably got an A). One of the keys to writing publishable papers—as well as term papers and dissertation chapters—is to stop thinking of your first draft as 90% of the work. It's more like 5% of the work. The first draft doesn't need to be even minimally acceptable, and no one else ever has to see it. Just get it onto the page, so that you have something to work with. (I've heard this called the "puke and stir" method.) If you realize you've gotten something wrong as you're writing, don't try to fix it; just stick in a footnote explaining to yourself why it's not right as it stands, and move on. If you figure out a better way of organizing the earlier sections when you're in the middle of composing some later section, there's no need to drop everything and start reorganizing: just insert a note-to-self at the top of the document describing the change you want to make, and get back to what you were doing. If you decide halfway through to use a different label for some thesis or position, just start using it, and don't bother going back to change the earlier bits. Trust your future self to make the changes when you begin the long process of revision. Soon you will have a full draft, probably consisting of 50% sloppily-written text and 50% notes-to-self. Your work isn't done, but one of the hardest parts (staring down a blank page) is behind you.

Writing Introductions
Writing an introduction for the paper as a whole, or for sections of the paper, or even writing the first sentence of individual paragraphs can be daunting. How do you know

how to introduce the paper (section, paragraph) before you know exactly where it's headed? This can lead to a sort of paralysis: unsure of which of two ways things might unfold, you keep tinkering with that first sentence, writing and deleting, writing and deleting. This is especially frustrating when you have a rough idea of what you'd like to say in the section or paragraph, and you're itching to get started writing it, but that first sentence is standing between you and getting the ideas down on paper. So remember: a first draft is only 5% of the work, and if all goes well it will be completely overhauled in the revision process. So start the paragraph with a "placeholder" sentence like: "Now I'm going to say a thing about Smith's objection." And then move on. Start the section by writing: "In this section, I'm going make a bunch of preliminary points about the nature of vagueness, in no particular order." And then move on. Once you've got the rest of paper (section, paragraph) written, you can replace these placeholder introductory sentences with something more appropriate.

Revisions
When you've finished the first full draft, the revisions begin. Pause on each sentence and ask yourself these four questions: (1) What is this sentence supposed to be saying, and does it say *exactly* that? (2) How might someone who took this sentence completely literally try to deny it, and can I guard against such objections simply by rephrasing the sentence? (3) Can I delete this sentence entirely, or somehow make it shorter or simpler? (4) Why is this sentence right here, and does it belong somewhere else in the paper? When you've done this for every sentence in the paper, go back to the beginning and start again. And when you find that you get from the beginning to the end of your paper and you're happy with the wording and placement of every sentence, and you can't find a single word in the paper that can be cut out, that's when you know it's ready to submit to a journal.

Validity
Whether you're breaking an argument down into indented numbered premises, or just writing it out in paragraph form—and whether it's your own argument or one that you're attributing to someone else—think about the logical structure of the argument. I don't mean: translate it into logical notation. What I mean is ask yourself: How can the relevant line of reasoning be represented as an explicitly valid argument? What are *all* the premises you need in order to logically guarantee the conclusion? In doing so, you will often gain a deeper understanding of the argument, and you may uncover hidden assumptions that have been overlooked in the literature. As I once heard it put: when you make an argument valid, it reveals its secrets. Once this practice of working out the logical structure of arguments becomes second nature, I think you'll find it an immensely useful skill to have. As practice, every time you present an argument in your classes, make sure it's explicitly valid, even if it's just a simple two-premise modus ponens or modus tollens argument.

Document as Workspace
While you're in the middle of working on the paper, there's no need for the document to look like a neat and clean draft. Insert notes to self in footnotes, flagging objections that have occurred to you or worries you have about the phrasing of particular sentences that

at the moment you're not sure how to fix. Underline sentences and phrases that <u>you think</u> you might eventually want to delete. [If you're not sure which of two ways to put something][If you have two ways of saying something and can't decide which one to go with], just stick both of them in brackets and move on—you'll make the decision later. When your advisor raises some objection that you're not yet sure how to deal with, or if you have a thought about the paper as you're in the middle of working on something else, jot it down as a note-to-self in bold font at the top of the document, and get back to whatever you were doing.

New Day, New Document
As soon as you've completed a first draft, save the paper as a new document with the date in the title (e.g., Refuting Utilitarianism 9-15-21). Then, every day when you open the paper to work on it, save it as a new document (Refuting Utilitarianism 9-17-21). That way, you can always retrieve material from earlier versions, if necessary. Keep all of these documents in a single folder, devoted to that paper. In the same folder, create a document for discarded "junk". Instead of just deleting an old version of a section or paragraph or footnote from the current draft, cut and paste it into this junk document, possibly with a note-to-self explaining why this version of it was unsatisfactory (so that you'll resist the temptation to put it back in later on when you've forgotten why you took it out in the first place). Creating new documents each day makes it less stressful to make major changes to papers: if the new plan doesn't work out, it will be easy enough to revert to the old version.

Dealing with Paralysis
You've set aside the whole day for writing, and here it is 1pm and you still haven't gotten anything done. Perhaps you're trying to start a new section, and you've just been staring at the screen and tinkering with the first two sentences for hours. Perhaps you can't stay focused and you keep compulsively checking your email and Facebook. Here are some techniques that I've found helpful.

- Open a new blank document and just start writing down your thoughts in no particular order. This helps eliminate some of the pressure to properly work the ideas into the paper, or to get things exactly or even approximately right. If you end up with something useful, you can copy and paste it into the paper. (Just paste it at the top of the document; you can worry about how exactly to incorporate it into the paper later.)
- Open a new blank document and copy and paste a (section of an) article or book chapter that's relevant to your paper—maybe the section raising the objection your paper is replying to. Then work through it paragraph-by-paragraph. Put key sentences in bold font. Beneath each paragraph, try to restate the main or most interesting ideas in your own words; pick apart ways the author phrases things; jot down questions and objections; try to reconstruct the arguments or extrapolate the principles the author is relying on. Again, if you end up with something useful, copy and paste it into your paper.
- Go to some part of the paper you've already written, and start reading aloud to yourself. Unless it's already beautifully polished prose, you'll find sentences in need of revision, and editing them may get you into the flow of writing and ease you in to tackling the section or paragraph or blank page that had derailed you.

- If you've taken my advice above, your paper should be chock-full of notes-to-self. Go through them and tidy them up: moving the ones jotted down at the top of the document to footnotes at the relevant parts of the paper, rephrasing bits that could be clearer, even just fixing typos. In the process, you may find a note-to-self that you're ready to act upon, and that might help you regain your momentum for working on the paper.
- If you have a vague plan to spend all day on a paper, the day will likely slip away and little or nothing will get done. Better to schedule a handful of one- or two-hour chunks of time. In those hours, you will not leave your chair, answer your phone, check your email, get on the internet, or even open any book or article. You will either type or stare at the screen. Sometimes you may find yourself then painlessly going on for another four hours, having gotten the ball rolling. (Thanks to Kranti Saran for this tip.)
- Set yourself manageable daily goals, for instance: write or substantially edit one full page of philosophy each day. (More from Shieva Kleinschmidt on this method here: https://www.dropbox.com/s/45nzr6ftbzio90e/Daily%20Philosophy%20Pages.pdf
- When you finish work for the day, stop right in the middle of a sentence. That way, you'll have a manageable task to start you off the following day: finishing the sentence. (Thanks to Al Hájek for this one.)
- When all else fails, find something else productive to do. Here's a link to John Perry's helpful discussion of "structured procrastination": http://www.structuredprocrastination.com/

Dealing with Distractions

When you *are* managing to get something written, don't let task-unrelated thoughts derail you (e.g., the sudden fleeting urge to go online to find out the name of that guy from Parks and Rec). I've found it effective to keep a notepad nearby and jot these things down as they flit through my mind and threaten to steer me off-course, and then I deal with them all in one go when I really am ready for a break. And if you're a compulsive email-checker (like me), give yourself designated times to check (e.g., once every two hours, on the hour).

Here are some general guides to writing I've seen recommended:

> Richard Lanham, *Revising Prose*
> Joseph Williams and Joseph Bizup, *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*

4. Conferences

Unlike with journals, it's fine to simultaneously send the same paper to multiple conferences, and to present it at multiple conferences. It's never too early to start submitting to conferences, though I would recommend getting started no later than the beginning of your third year in grad school. Here are some of the many reasons to get involved in conferences.

Professional Identity

Attending conferences helps establish a professional identity. If you're a constant presence at professional conferences, people will come to think of you as one of the voices in your particular area, and may think of you as a potential commentator for future conferences or as a potential speaker for invite-only conferences. It will also affect your conception of your own work in fruitful ways. When you begin discussing your papers and your views with other people doing serious work in your field, you'll get a better appreciation of the *point* of writing papers, which is to convince real, live people—who you've talked to, so you know what it takes to convince them—of whatever it is you're arguing for.

Feedback

Presenting a paper is a quick way to get lots of feedback on your work. Most importantly—in terms of eventually getting your paper published—you get a sense of what people think are the most serious objections to your paper (which may be different from what you and your advisor think are the most serious objections), what sorts of responses to these objections people find convincing (ditto), which philosophers and specific articles people think you ought to be addressing (ditto), and which misunderstandings of your theses and arguments you need to guard against.

Contacts

Conferences are a great way of making a variety of contacts.

- Potential employers. If someone remembers having interesting conversations or pleasant interactions with you, they'll be more likely to have a close look at your job application—if only because it's a name they recognize in a sea of faceless applicants. And friends you've made at conferences who have gotten a job and know that you struck out on the job market may float your name when their department needs a last-minute visiting professor.
- Philosophers from other universities to serve on your dissertation committee and/or write you letters of recommendation.
- Email correspondents. When you're writing a paper and end up needing to say something about an area you don't know much about, it's nice to be able to fire off a quick, casual email to someone you know who works in that area.
- Readers. The more people you know, the more likely it is that people will actually read your work.

Experience

Everything about the job market is so foreign. If you've presented at a bunch of conferences, at least the job talk and the schmoozing with professional philosophers will be familiar terrain. You also get experience dealing with badly-behaved, hostile questioners in question periods. This can be pretty unsettling the first time you encounter it, so don't let that first time be when you're on the market.

What's Publishable

When you attend a conference, you'll see a whole bunch of well-written papers, which will help you develop an intuitive sense of what publishable papers look like, and what good and bad talks look like.

Fellowships

Conferencing will help make you competitive for campus-wide fellowship competitions, for instance dissertation fellowships or (for those applying from MA to PhD programs) recruitment fellowships. Committees for these competitions will often be entirely composed of nonphilosophers, and the number of conferences (and publications) is one of the measures they'll use for comparing you to other nominees for the fellowships. Active conferencing may also increase the likelihood that your home department will choose you as its nominee.

Which Conferences?

Grad student conferences can be a good starting point. But you shouldn't hesitate to jump right in with professional conferences. For the most part, they aren't any more difficult to get into, and the audiences aren't any less friendly or welcoming. Presentations at professional conferences will also probably help job seekers more than presentations at student conferences, because (i) you are more likely to meet potential employers at a professional conference and (ii) having a CV full of grad conferences makes you look more like a grad student and less like a potential colleague. Here are some that I've attended and enjoyed: American Philosophical Association (Pacific, Central, and Eastern), Central States Philosophical Association, Illinois Philosophical Association, Mountain Plains Philosophy Conference, Northwest Philosophy Conference, and the Society for Exact Philosophy. The calls for papers can usually be found by doing a Google search, or by searching PhilEvents. See Appendix III for a long list of annual professional conferences.

Titling Your Paper

Conferences often have concurrent sessions, which means that people will have a choice of which session to attend. So make sure that the title of your paper clearly conveys what the paper is about. For instance, avoid titles like "Solving The Pairing Problem"; you might miss out on conference participants who are interested in mental causation and personal identity but don't realize that that's what "the pairing problem" is about.

Receiving Comments

Often, your paper will be assigned a commentator. Check with your commentator before you make *any* changes to the content of the paper. It would really suck if your commentator puts a lot of work into her comments, and then you send her a totally revised draft two weeks before the conference. And certainly don't make changes to the talk after you receive the comments *in order to* head off her objections. Think how embarrassing this is for the commentator, whose prepared comments will now seem completely off-target. You'll have your chance to respond to the comments before the question period. Finally, there is no need to reply to every point your commentator makes. Sometimes commentators raise a whole slew of distinct objections. In such cases,

respond to the one or two most serious objections, invite your audience to press you on the objections that you didn't get to, and (most importantly) don't spend more than five minutes replying. By this point, audience members are getting antsy and want to ask their own questions.

Giving Comments
If you yourself are serving as a commentator, your goal should be to serve the speaker. It's their session. Spend the first five minutes clearly reiterating the speaker's main line of argument (everyone will be grateful). Don't try to stuff every objection you can think of into the comments; focus on just one or two. You can always email the speaker your other objections, or chat after the session. Finally, resist the urge to express your dissatisfaction as the speaker replies to your comments (with faces or head-shaking or exasperated sighs), and definitely resist the urge to address the speaker's response to your comments once the question period begins. You've had your turn, and now the audience wants to press their objections.

Asking Questions
Two bits of advice for asking questions in the question period that follows the talk. First: when it's your turn, ask *one* question. If you have further questions, raise your hand again after everyone else has had a chance to ask their question. When you rattle off three questions at once (as people sometimes do), it's really tough for the speaker to keep track. Plus, it's inconsiderate, especially when lots of other people want to get their questions in. Second: know when to stop talking. This has multiple facets. (i) Be concise. As you're just about to finish asking your question, you may think of a better way of making your point, or it may suddenly occur to you how they might respond and you'll feel tempted to try to head off their response. Resist temptation. Stop talking, see what they say, and ask a follow-up if necessary. (ii) Let them answer. Sometimes, it'll *seem* clear to you from the very first sentence of their response that they've misunderstood the question or that they've stepped right into your trap. That is not your cue to start talking again. Let them finish, and then follow up after they've said their whole piece. (Also, as an exercise in self-awareness, note how the temptation to interrupt intensifies when the speaker is a woman.) (iii) Know when to stop following up. If they don't understand the question or they don't have a good answer, and if this remains clear after one follow-up, let it go; you can always continue the exchange after the session ends. It's also good practice to ask permission from the chair before asking a follow-up, so that she has the opportunity to cut off the exchange if there's a long line of people waiting to ask questions.

5. Delivering Papers

Presenting vs. Reading
Your talk should be a well-rehearsed presentation. By "well-rehearsed", I mean that you're not simply improvising from a handout or some powerpoint slides. Do numerous trial runs of the talk, alone and aloud. These practice runs give you a chance to try out various tempting digressions, and see whether they lead somewhere interesting (in which case you can incorporate them into the talk), or whether they're a dead end. By

"presentation", I mean you're not simply reading the words off the page. It's increasingly uncommon for speakers to read their papers, and audiences are becoming increasingly annoyed by such behavior. If you absolutely must read your paper, spend some time beforehand simplifying the sentences to make the paper easier to follow. And make sure to practice reading it out loud; you don't want to be stumbling over difficult sentences. Finally, make sure your paper is within the time limit. Audiences get annoyed when you cut into their question period or bathroom break.

Preparing a Presentation
In preparation for the talk, spend some time rewriting your paper, with the aim of making the wording more casual and "auditorily digestible". Think about what it'll be difficult for people to understand, and devote a little more time to these points. For especially complicated bits (e.g., addressing subtle objections that won't occur to most people), consider leaving them out of the talk, and just letting them come up in the question period if they occur to anyone. And anyway, it's nice to have some worked-out responses to likely objections "up your sleeve" for the question period. (Caveat: in the case of conference papers, don't make any substantive changes to the content without first consulting your commentator.) Finally, it's fine to have a copy of the rewritten paper in your hands as you give the talk, though if you've rehearsed it enough times you should only need to peek at it once every couple sentences.

Presentation Style
Your presentation should be articulate, sober, and deliberate. Articulate: Choose your words carefully, and give clear official statements of every thesis, premise, and objection under discussion. Sober: Treat your opponents with respect, not least because some of them, or some of their friends or colleagues, might be in the audience. If someone in the question period jumps on your bandwagon and starts ranting about your opponents, you be the level-headed one, defending your opponents against any misguided bits of the rant. Deliberate: Know what you're going to say, and say it with confidence. It's disorienting when speakers leave it unclear whether they actually endorse the things coming out of their mouth—for instance, when they reveal their insecurities about some argument they've just given. It's also annoying when you get the impression that the speaker still hasn't sorted out exactly what they want to say or how they want to put it (e.g., when they keep trailing off into digressions that they don't finish).

Handouts
Always have a handout. The handout should (i) display the structure of the paper, (ii) enable the audience to catch up if they zone out for a few minutes, and (iii) enable them to revisit and scrutinize the exact wording of your central theses and arguments. Whenever there is an important chunk of text on the handout, it's good to read it out loud, verbatim. Don't expect your audience to be able to simultaneously read what's on the handout and listen to what you're saying about it. Also, make sure you have more than enough handouts: 30 or 40 is usually a good number.

Powerpoint

Using powerpoint is fine in principle, but there are lots of ways to screw it up. First, don't simply copy your entire talk, word-for-word, onto the slides as a series of bullet points, which you then read off the screen. Second, just because you're using powerpoint, that doesn't mean that you don't need a handout; see points (i), (ii), and (iii) just above. Third, make sure that your handout syncs up with the powerpoint slides. For instance, make sure the section headings are the same, the theses and arguments are worded the same, and all the same information is on both. When they don't sync up—and worse, if what's on the handout, what's on the slide, and what coming out of your mouth are three different things—this can be very disorienting for the audience. I would recommend simply distributing a print-out of the slides themselves as a handout. If that's what you do, you should prepare the slides in a such a way that they'll double as a good handout.

6. Teaching

Teaching Statement
As indicated above, most of the jobs you'll be applying to will be very interested in your teaching abilities. These schools will take a close look at your "teaching statement", a document in your job applications in which you describe your approach to teaching philosophy. If you want to stand out from the pack and have a shot at these jobs, you'll need to have something thoughtful to say about pedagogy that goes beyond the usual clichés about the value of critical thinking skills, challenging students to question their deepest beliefs, how teaching philosophy is more than just teaching some facts, etc. And when you get asked questions about teaching in your job interviews, you want to come across as one professional teacher talking to another about what works and what doesn't, as opposed to a grad student struggling to answer tricky questions. The way to do this is to have already given a lot a thought to teaching by the time you're on the job market and to have made the most of your teaching opportunities—especially opportunities to teach and design and refine your own courses. You might even read through some books on pedagogy, for instance *Teaching Nonmajors: Advise for Liberal Arts Professors*.

Choose Classes
To the extent that you have any control over your course assignments, try to teach and TA a broad range of classes. Seize opportunities to teach classes that many schools advertise teaching needs in but that few applicants will have teaching experience in, e.g., nonwestern philosophy, race and gender, environmental ethics, and (especially) online courses. Also seize opportunities to teach courses that most schools teach in regular rotation: logic, ethics, ancient, early modern. If you get assigned intro to philosophy, you should consider teaching it primarily with ancient or early modern texts, so you can claim teaching experience in ancient or early modern in your job market materials.

Community Colleges
You might consider picking up a course or two at a community college, perhaps over the summer. Having some community college teaching experience makes a world of difference in getting a permanent job at a community college. Also, you'll likely get a more diverse group of students at a community college class than at your home

university, and it's useful to have that experience when producing your teaching statement as well as your diversity statement for job applications.

Try Things Out
Make the most of your teaching opportunities by trying things out in your syllabi and in class that may get you outside your comfort zone. Diversify your syllabus. Experiment with outside-the-box ideas for assignments. Experiment with active learning activities, beyond simple lecture/discussion format. This can include not just group work, but also staging debates or "think/pair/share" exercises. These are the sorts of things you can talk about in your job market materials that will make you stand out from the pack—especially if, over time, you've had some one activity or syllabus or creative assignment or peer-review exercise that you've been refining and rethinking and developing. Loads of interesting ideas get tossed around in the Teaching Philosophy group on facebook:
    https://www.facebook.com/groups/290224531608120/

Teaching Letter
You'll definitely want at least one of your job market letter writers—or, better yet, *all* of them—to be able to speak to your teaching abilities. Take the initiative, and find a faculty member who's willing to come observe you teach several times over the course of your grad career, and who can then write an informed job market letter about your teaching and perhaps about your improvement over time. When you are being observed, make sure to do something special, like an interesting active learning activity. This helps us help you by giving us some concrete, unique things to write about in our classroom observations.

Finally, you should look into pedagogy programs and certificates offered at your university. (As a friend at a community college put it, "deans love certificates".)

7. Coursework

Choosing Courses
You should choose classes with an eye to establishing one or two AOCs (areas of competence) for the job market. Departments are often looking for AOCs connected to courses that they offer frequently: ancient, early modern, ethics, and logic. And certain AOCs that are less commonly advertised—nonwestern philosophy, feminist philosophy, environmental ethics, business ethics, philosophy of race—might open doors for you since fewer candidates will be a good fit for those jobs.

In class
Speak in class, and ask loads of clarification questions. Better to ask what exactly 'supervenience' or 'analyticity' means in front of your professor and classmates than to have to ask for clarification in a conference presentation or (worse) a job interview. Arguing with your professors and classmates is fun and all, but your time in class is best spent making sure you understand with maximum clarity the arguments and positions under discussion. Take detailed notes in class, and try get everything down on (physical sheets of) paper. Then, when you get home, type up your notes. This will help you

process and retain the information. Plus, the typed-up, organized notes will be a great resource later on if you need to teach the material in your own classes.

Term Papers
When you write your term papers, make it a goal to write a paper that can eventually be published. Try to settle on a (tentative) term paper topic as early in the semester as possible, ideally in the first week of class. Zero in on the most interesting topic on the syllabus, and start browsing PhilPapers or Google Scholar for papers on that topic. Track down ten or fifteen papers that look interesting and start reading through them. Scour the bibliographies of the articles you find the most interesting, and track down anything that looks relevant. If all goes well, within a couple weeks you will have identified a specific issue with a manageable literature to focus your energies on, and you can begin re-reading and re-re-reading the most relevant papers.

8. Miscellaneous

Colloquia
You should—and, really, are expected to—attend all of the departmental colloquia, even the ones that aren't in your main area of interest. It's a good idea for all sorts of reasons to familiarize yourself with topics in areas outside your specialization. Among other things, it's nice to be able to speak intelligently with potential employers outside your area about *their* interests when you're on a campus visit. And when the colloquium speakers are in your area, seize the opportunity to get to know them, pepper them with questions, and get a sense of how people are thinking about your field outside of our your university's bubble. Here are some helpful discussions of expectations and etiquette at colloquia:

> http://philosiology.blogspot.com/2011/04/colloquia-and-philosophy-talks.html
> http://guylongworth.wordpress.com/2013/12/09/asking-questions/

Dissertation
The greatest virtue that a dissertation can have is *being finished*. So learn how to write well and how to work through paralysis and writer's block, using the tips given above in §3. Pretend that you're always enrolled in a course with your advisor, with a term paper (chapter) due at the end of each quarter/semester, and that—as it was during coursework—you often (if not always) have to start writing well before the paper idea has crystalized in your head. Aim to have at least two chapters that can be submitted for publication when the dissertation is done (if not earlier!) and that you can use as a writing sample and job talk. It's probably best—from the standpoint of getting a job and, eventually, tenure—to have a dissertation consisting of five or six stand-alone papers centered around a common theme, as opposed to writing a magnum opus and then later trying to figure out how to isolate chunks of it for publication. See here for discussion:

> http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2013/07/phd-as-a-series-of-articles-rather-than-a-traditional-thesis.html

Finally, as soon as you have a preliminary idea of what the different chapters will be, you should create a document devoted to each chapter. Whenever you have some ideas for that chapter, or you encounter some article that you want to remember to read when you

get to that chapter, make a note of it in the document for that chapter. That way, when you get ready to start that chapter, you won't be facing a blank page; rather, you'll have pages and pages of notes to self to get you started.

Leaving Academia
There is nothing wrong with leaving the profession in search of a non-academic job after receiving your Ph.D. In fact, even if you're planning to stay in the profession, it's worthwhile to identify a contingency plan early on in your time in grad school, and perhaps spend your summers getting a foot in the door with that (e.g. through internships). Many universities have some sort of career services center for grad students, where you can go for advice about what sorts of jobs you might want to pursue and how to turn your CV into a non-academic résumé. You might also pick up a copy of the book *So What Are You Going to Do with That?* for useful discussion of finding careers outside academia. More here:

http://www.newappsblog.com/2014/06/philosophers-who-work-outside-of-academia-part-1-how-and-why-do-they-end-up-there.html
http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2015/09/job-market-boot-camp-part-21-opting-for-a-non-academic-career-when-what-and-how-.html#more
http://www.philskills.com/
http://dailynous.com/2017/01/23/profiles-non-academics-philosophy-degrees/
https://www.imaginephd.com/
https://beyondprof.com/
https://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2020/04/what-i-learned-from-leaving-academic-philosophy-guest-post-by-samuel-kampa.html

Reading
To really get a handle on what's going on in some article or book, you're going to have to read it slowly and carefully, with meticulous attention to detail. However, the *first* time you read through it, you should plow through it without pausing to make sure you've understood every claim and every argument. It's much easier to understand a paper *after* you've seen where it's headed and how it gets there. Also, you'll be wasting a lot of time if you read every paper with great care. Better to read a whole stack of papers, and then figure out which ones are most relevant to your project and worthy of a greater time investment. And as I said in §3, you have to know when it's time to stop reading and start writing!

Reading Notes
When I read through a paper, I open up a document and keep a running tab of what happens in each paragraph. It's rarely more than a single line of text per paragraph, rarely a complete sentence, and I don't worry too much about the accuracy or completeness of the characterization (thus, it's compatible with my advice about the first read-through). It ends up looking something like this:

      8a Against Armstrong's defense of universals
      8b Against indispensability arguments
      9a An ontology of possibilia; properties = sets of possibilia
      9b On whether universals should replace possibilia

9- Outline of the article

("8b" means: the second paragraph on page 8; "9-" means the paragraph beginning on page 9 and continuing onto the next page.) You may find that this helps you stay focused as you read, and the notes can be extremely useful several years down the road, when you vaguely remember that Jones said such and such somewhere in her book, and you can just pull up the notes and skim through them (or do a keyword search) to figure out where exactly she said it. These "notes" documents are also a good place to jot down some of your thoughts while you're reading.

Staying Informed

Sign up for "Table of Contents" alerts for the top journals, either on PhilPapers or on journal websites (or both). You'll get a table of contents by email every time a new issue comes out, and you can browse it for papers that look relevant to your research. Also, the APA has three meetings per year, and the conference programs are available online. Browse through the abstracts for papers in your areas, and if there's something interesting you can contact the author and ask for a copy or possibly just download it from the author's website or the APA website.

Using the Faculty

Learn how to make the most of the faculty here, by figuring out our individual strengths and weaknesses. Some of us are good for big-picture brainstorming and others are good for fine-tuning the small details. Some prefer email correspondence, others prefer meeting in office hours or over lunch, others may prefer a phone call in the evening. If someone on your committee never gets around to commenting on your drafts, see if you can take them out to coffee, fill them in on your project, and try to get feedback in person. Don't get discouraged if one way of trying to get feedback doesn't work. Find a way to get the feedback and face-time you need, even when we're not reaching out to you as much as we could or should.

Website

Have an online presence. Put up a website with a photo, an autobiographical blurb, a CV, and perhaps some works in progress. If someone catches your name somewhere (e.g., if I happen to mention to someone that you're working on the same issue as them), they might google you. If they find your website, they may read your work and may be more likely to remember you when you're on the job market. Some discussion here:
   http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2012/05/maintaining-a-personal-web-page-while-on-the-job-market.html
Also, be sure to stay on top of your web presence. If you have a personal webpage and a departmental webpage and an Academia page and a PhilPapers page, make sure to keep them all up-to-date.

Works in Progress

Once you have a website, you may or may not want to post unpublished works in progress there that are in fairly good shape. On the one hand, it makes it more likely that people will come to know you and your work, and you may even get some helpful, unsolicited feedback. On the other hand, most people won't read your paper more than

once, so it'd be unfortunate if the first and last version they read is an early underdeveloped draft. Also, a badly behaved journal referee for a paper you've submitted may google your paper title, and if they discover you're just a grad student they may take your paper less seriously. Both problems can be mitigated to some extent by posting the paper under one title and submitting it under another. My view is that the pros of posting works in progress outweigh the cons.

Appendix I: Useful Resources

Google Scholar
https://scholar.google.com

When you search for an article or book here, there's a link to a list of articles and books that have cited it—very helpful for figuring out what you need to read in order to master a given literature. You can also set up Google Scholar so that it gives you a direct link to the article through our library: last I checked, you can do this by clicking "Scholar Preferences," then "Library Links."

Journal Statistics
https://blog.apaonline.org/2017/04/13/journal-surveys-assessing-the-peer-review-process/

This page compiles useful information (from an ongoing online survey) about acceptance rates for various journals, the average time it takes between submission and decision, and so forth.

Philosiology
philosiology.blogspot.com/

A (now defunct but still) useful resource for your partners, parents, and friends, self-described as "a guide to help you learn how to relate to your philosopher and, in the end, to learn how to love and live with them peacefully." Posts include: "Buying Gifts for Your Philosopher: Dos and Don'ts", "Living with Your Philosopher: Incessant Questioning", and "Thought Experiments".

PhilPapers
philpapers.org

This is a fantastically useful site. It catalogues tons of books and articles, and in many cases has links to pdfs. There's an elaborate category system, which is great for compiling a list of readings for a term paper or dissertation chapter. You can set up "table of contents alerts", where you choose as many journals as you like, and you'll get weekly emails listing new papers that have been published in those journals. And you can indicate your areas of interest and receive weekly emails listing new papers in those areas that philosophers have posted on their personal websites.

Pryor's Writing Advice
www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

This is some excellent (and entertaining) advice on writing philosophy papers. Give your students the link and study it yourself as well.

Stanford Encyclopedia
plato.stanford.edu

The entries here are peer-reviewed, and every entry is (supposed to be) updated every couple of years. This is an incredible resource—the perfect starting point for familiarizing yourself with a new area—and the entries are often fantastically clear and helpful. Plus, there's a search engine, so it's useful for figuring out what a certain term of art means when you're not sure which entry to look in.

Appendix II: Journal Rankings

General Rankings

The list below gives the results of a profession-wide survey, set up by Brian Leiter, for "General Philosophy Journals." *Thought* (#28) is a specialty journal, specializing in very short pieces (like Analysis). It was brand new at the time this survey was conducted (April 2012), and I suspect that in the coming years it will become better known and more highly regarded. *Ergo*, which was created after this poll was conducted, has also come to be recognized as a high quality journal.

1. Philosophical Review
2. Nous
3. Journal of Philosophy
4. Mind
5. Philosophy & Phenomenological Research
6. Philosophical Studies
7. Australasian Journal of Philosophy
8. Analysis
9. Philosophical Quarterly
10. Philosopher's Imprint
11. Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society
12. American Philosophical Quarterly
13. Canadian Journal of Philosophy
14. Pacific Philosophical Quarterly
15. European Journal of Philosophy
16. Synthese
17. Erkenntnis
18. Monist
19. Philosophical Topics
20. Ratio
21. Analytic Philosophy
22. Southern Journal of Philosophy
23. Inquiry
24. Philosophy
25. Theoria-a Swedish Journal of Philosophy
26. Review of Metaphysics
27. International Philosophical Studies
28. Thought

Rankings by Specialty

Here is an excerpt from an earlier posting on the Leiter reports, in which Leiter listed his own impressions of the breakdown of journals by specialty.
Metaphysics, Epistemology, Phil Language, and Phil Mind
- Excellent: Philosophical Review, Mind, Journal of Philosophy, Nous
- Good: Philosophical Studies, Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Synthese, Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophy & Phenomenological Research, Analysis,

- Also Notable: Pacific Philosophical Quarterly, Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Erkenntnis, Linguistics & Philosophy, Mind & Language, Behavioral & Brain Sciences, Journal of Consciousness Studies, American Philosophical Quarterly, European Journal of Philosophy, Ratio, Journal of Philosophical Logic.

Phil Science, Biology, and Physics
- Excellent: Philosophical Review, Journal of Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, British Journal for the Philosophy of Science
- Good: Biology & Philosophy, Synthese, Erkenntnis, Philosophical Studies, Nous
- Also Notable: Studies in History and Philosophy of Science

Moral, Political, Legal
- Excellent: Ethics, Philosophy & Public Affairs, Philosophical Review, Journal of Philosophy.
- Good: Nous, Journal of Political Philosophy, Mind
- Also Notable: Political Theory, Legal Theory, Law & Philosophy, Oxford Journal of Legal Studies, Analysis, Economic & Philosophy, Utilitas, European Journal of Philosophy, American Philosophical Quarterly, Pacific Philosophical Quarterly, Ratio, Philosophical Quarterly.

Ancient
- Excellent: Phronesis, Philosophical Review, Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy
- Good: Classical Quarterly, Apeiron, Journal of the History of Philosophy
- Also Notable: History of Philosophy Quarterly, Review of Metaphysics, Ancient Philosophy, Archiv fur Geschicte der Philosophie.

History of Modern
- Excellent: Philosophical Review, Journal of the History of Philosophy
- Good: British Journal for the History of Philosophy, History of Philosophy Quarterly
- Also Notable: Archiv fur Geschicte der Philosophie, Journal of the History of Ideas, Review of Metaphysics.
- Note: there are various specialty journals here, many quite reputable among experts (example: Hume Studies).

Continental
- Excellent: Journal of the History of Philosophy, European Journal of Philosophy, Philosophy & Phenomenological Research
- Good: History of Philosophy Quarterly, British Journal for the History of Philosophy
- Also Notable: Continental Philosophy Review (formerly Man & World), Review of Metaphysics, Inquiry, Archiv fur Geschicte der Philosophie, Journal of the History of Ideas.

Appendix III: Annual Professional Conferences[1]

Name	Topic area(s)	Location	Deadline (Approximate)	Date (Approximate)
Bellingham Summer Philosophy Conference	Contemporary analytic	Western Washington University	March 1	Early August
Eastern APA	Any area	Eastern USA (various)	February 15	Early January (starting Jan 2016)
Central APA	Any area	Central USA (various)	June 1	February/March
Pacific APA	Any area	Western USA (various)	September 1	January
Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP)	Any area	Australasia (various)	Early June	July
The Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association	Any area	United Kingdom and Ireland (various)	February	July
Canadian Philosophical Association (CPA)	Any area	Canada (various)	January	May
Northwest Philosophy Conference (NWPC)	Contemporary analytic	Northwest USA (various)	August	Late October/early November
Inland Northwest Philosophy Conference (INPC)	Contemporary analytic (topic focused)	Idaho	December	March
Wisconsin Metaethics Workshop	Metaethics	Madison, Wisconsin	May 1	September
Formal Epistemology Workshop	Formal Epistemology	USA (various)	January/February	May/June
The Society for Exact Philosophy	Contemporary analytic	Canada/US (various)	March	May/June
Rocky	Ethics	Boulder	February 1	August

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[1] Compiled by Liz Harman, long ago

Mountain Ethics Congress		Colorado		
The Philosophy of Science Association	Philosophy of Science	US & Canada (various)	March 1	Early November (biennial)
Northwestern Society for the Theory of Ethics and Politics	Ethics and Political Philosophy	Northwestern University	December	March/May
British Society for Ethical Theory	Ethics	Britain (various)	December 1	July
Society for Philosophy and Psychology	Philosophy and Psychology	US and Canada (various)	February	June
Central States Philosophical Ass. (CSPA)	Any area	Central USA (various)	May/June	September/October
American Society for Bioethics and Humanities	Bioethics and Humanities	USA (various)	March	October
Association for Practical and Professional Ethics	Practical and professional ethics	USA (various)	October	February
Midsouth Philosophy Conference	Any area	Rhodes College	January	February
St. Louis Annual Conference on Reasons and Rationality	Practical and theoretical reason	St Louis	January 4	May
ASSC (Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness)	Consciousness	(Various)	May/June	July
Toward a Science of Consciousness	Consciousness	(Various)	December	April/June
MAWM: Midwest Annual Workshop in Metaphysics	Metaphysics (workshop)	US (various)	September 1 (registration)	September/October

FEAST (Feminist Ethics and Social Theory)	Ethics and Social Theory	US (various)	February	October
NASSP: North American Society for Social Phil	Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy	US (various)	January (non-US)/March (US)	July
Illinois Philosophical Association	Any area	Illinois	July	November
Midsummer Philosophy Workshop	Any area	Britain (various)	April	June/July
The European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ESPP)	Philosophy and Psychology	Europe (various)	April	September
GAP (German Analytic Philosophy Association)	Contemporary analytic	Germany	January 2015	September 2015 (triennial)
ECAP (European Congress of Analytic Philosophy)	Contemporary analytic	Europe (various)	2017	August/September 2017 (triennial)
International Wittgenstein Symposium	Various	Kirchberg, Luxembourg	May	August
FEMMSS (Feminist Epistemologies, Methodologies, Metaphysics, and Science Studies)	Feminist philosophy	US and Canada (various)	(various)	(various)
ISHPSSB (The International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology)	Philosophy of biology	(various)	February	July 2015 (biennial)
Normative Ethics Workshop	Normative Ethics	Arizona	June	January
Workshop for	Political	US (various)	April	September/October

Oxford Studies in Political Philosophy	Philosophy			
New Orleans Workshop on Agency and Responsibility	Agency and Responsibility	New Orleans	March	November
PROGIC (Workshop on Combining Probability and Logic)	Probability and Logic	Germany (various)	April	September